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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A digital rights management system for the distribution, protection and use of electronic content. The system includes a client architecture which receives content, where the content is preferably protected by encryption and may include a license and individualization features. Content is protected at several levels, including: no protection; source-sealed; individually-sealed (or "inscribed"); source-signed; and fully-individualized (or "owner exclusive"). The client also includes and/or receives components which permit the access and protection of the encrypted content, as well as components that allow content to be provided to the client in a form that is individualized for the client. In some cases, access to the content will be governed by a rights construct defined in the license bound to the content. The client components include an object which accesses encrypted content, an object that parses the license and enforces the rights in the license, an object which obtains protection software and data that is individualized for the client and/or the persona operating the client, and a script of instructions that provides individualization information to a distributor of content so that the content may be individualized for the client and/or its operating persona. Content is generally protected by encrypting it with a key and then sealing the key into the content in a way that binds it to the meta data associated with the content. In some instances, the key may also be encrypted in such a way as to be accessible only by the use of individualized protection software installed on the client, thereby binding use of the content to a particular client or set of clients.

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